

EXAMINATION

OF THE

Plan 23

PLANS PROPOSED FOR THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY'S SHIPPING; 2.

THE GREAT IMPORTANCE
OF ADOPTING A PROPER SYSTEM

EXPLAINED;

AND

A PLAN suggested for making the SHIPS employed in the
Commerce with Asia, beneficial both to the STATE
and to the EAST INDIA COMPANY.

By the Honourable JOHN COCHRANE.

DRAWN UP IN MARCH 1786,

AND NOW FIRST PUBLISHED, WITH A PREFACE.

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P R E F A C E.

FEBRUARY, 1795.

IT was in the beginning of the Year 1786, that the following Treatise was drawn up by the Author, at a time when the opinion of the Public was much divided upon the questions then agitated, concerning the freight and size of Ships employed or to be employed in the service of the East India Company.

Some proposals had been made for lowering the rate of freights, and at the same time diminishing the size of the Ships to be employed in the Commerce with Asia, whilst others opposed the diminution either of the freights, or the size of the Ships.

The Author of the following sheets, unconnected with either of the parties in that contest, had, after bestowing much attention to the subject, and after collecting accurate information from the best sources, formed a decided opinion in favour of the preference due to large Ships, foreseeing many advantages that would from thence accrue, both to the State and to the East India Company.

With a view, therefore, to point out these advantages, and to remove any objections that might be raised against the increased size of the East India Ships, the following Paper was drawn up, wherein the Author endeavours to shew, in the first place, that in so far as relates to the charges of freight, or other charges attending the transport of goods to and from Asia, the increased size of Ships ought to diminish instead of increasing these charges.

But the principal object of the paper was, to suggest a plan by which the great number of Ships and of Seamen employed in the Trade of the East India Company might be rendered subservient to the general interests of the State, as well as to the particular interests of that Company; in the course of which it was shewn, that by greatly increasing the size of the Ships employed in the China Trade in particular, and by a new mode of construction, under suitable regulations, the same Ships and Seamen that are employed in the Company's Commerce might be rendered of great utility as Ships of force in times of war, or upon sudden emergency.

The plan thus proposed was communicated, in the year 1786, not only to several of the Gentlemen then in the Direction of the East India Company's affairs, and to many of the Owners and Builders of Ships, who, after mature deliberation, declared their approbation; but it was likewise submitted to

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the consideration of several of his Majesty's Ministers, and in particular to the President of the Board of Controul, who seemed very much disposed to do every thing that depended on him, for giving effect to the suggestions therein contained. His approbation of the plan has been uniformly testified; and if it be true, as reported, that a negotiation is now carrying on between Mr. DUNDAS and the East India Shipping Owners, for supplying Government at this crisis with about twenty East India Ships, fit for the purposes of war, and of the size of Ships of the Line, this affords the most convincing proof, not only of approbation of the measure, but of a laudable attention to seize the first opportunity of converting it to the purposes of public utility.

The chief difficulty which at that time occurred against the plan proposed was, the want, in the river Thames, of wet and dry docks belonging to private individuals; for at that time there were none in the yards belonging to them sufficiently large to dock Ships above 1,100 tons; and some plans were drawn up by those connected with the small docks, to confine the size of Ships to 1,050 tons.

But on the Author's shewing to Mr. PERRY, of Blackwall, the plan, as contained in the following sheets, he was so much pleased with it, that he said he was then employed in making a dry dock fit to take in a Ship of the line, and if the East India Company would adopt the plan suggested, of an increased size of Ships, that he would, at his own expence, make a wet
dock

dock to take in that size of Ships. This he actually has done since that time—a noble instance of the spirit and exertions of an individual in this country.

Since the beginning of the year 1786, a number of Ships for the service of the East India Company have been built of a large size and upon an improved construction; and it is by this means that the Ship Owners are now in a condition to negotiate with Government for the use of these Ships in time of war.

But though much progress has been made in the course of these last few years, it is thought that the measure might yet be carried to a considerably greater extent, with evident utility, both to the interests of the State and of the East India Company, particularly by increasing the size of some of the China Ships beyond 1,200 tons, which, in general, is the greatest extent of tonnage that has hitherto been adopted.

On this account, and for exciting a spirit of emulation in a matter of such public concern, it has been thought proper to publish at this time the following sheets, which hitherto had remained in manuscript; though several copies of that manuscript were in circulation, and had been communicated to various persons of great respectability.

Another object for the publication is, that it contains, amongst other things, a plan, which has not hitherto been in
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any degree carried into effect, tending to shew, that the service on board the Ships of the East India Company, constructed for the double purposes of War and of Commerce, may, under proper Regulations, become a noble Nursery for Officers, not only for the Company's Service, but for that of the Navy of Great Britain, upon which the most important interests of the Empire so essentially depend.

To these reasons for the publication there may be added one other consideration, which is this, that at the present time there exists, as there did in the year 1786, a great contest, productive of much heat and animosity, between the old Shipping Interest of the East India Company and the Owners of Ships desirous of being admitted to a competition for supplying the Ships necessary for the commercial intercourse with Asia; and as the question between these parties, even at the time when the competitors had proposed only Ships of an inferior instead of an increased size (which plan of diminishing the size of the Ships they appear now to have departed from) was in the following sheets discussed without any partiality or acrimony, the publication may, at this time, be attended, perhaps, with some utility, in composing and reconciling the differences which now actually exist; for if it is assumed as a principle, that the Ships to be employed for the China trade, and for the trade on the Coast of Coromandel and the Malabar Coast, ought hereafter to be of a size and construction fit for the purposes of war as well as for those of commerce, that principle

ciple seems to bring along with it the necessity or propriety of Government and the East India Company transacting a business of this magnitude and importance with an established and opulent body of men, Owners and Builders of Ships, in preference to a plan of leaving a measure of this sort exposed to the hazard of its failure, from its being left open to the precarious resource of offers to be made by private unconnected individuals, of whose ability to perform such extensive engagements the Company may not have had sufficient experience; at the same time, if the preference is, from these considerations, given to the old Shipping interest, it would not be expedient to give it without securing by the most effectual precautions, that the Freights to be demanded by them shall be subject to regulation or arbitration, since otherwise that preference might degenerate into monopoly.

Even after settling this point with a preference to the old Shipping interest, in regard to the Ships of the largest construction, there might remain a sufficient fund of competition with regard to the Ships of inferior size; which, from the nature of the navigation of the Bengal river, and the particular circumstances of the trade to Bengal, must continue to be employed for the commerce with that part of the possessions belonging to the East India Company.

EXAMINATION

1786. MARCH.

EXAMINATION
OF THE DIFFERENT
PLANS
PROPOSED FOR THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY'S SHIPPING,
&c.

IN the present situation of the Trade and Possessions of the British Empire, it is become an object of the first magnitude and importance, to cultivate the advantages that may arise to this country from pursuing a right system, not only with respect to our Possessions in India, but also with respect to the mode of conducting the Commerce between Great Britain and those Possessions.

The quantity of Shipping employed by the East India Company in their Commerce with Asia is so very great, that from this source of itself may be derived very solid and essential advantages to Great Britain, if proper regulations are adopted with regard to the nature and size of the Ships employed.

For carrying on the Trade of the East India Company to India and China, it is estimated that one hundred thousand tons of Shipping are necessary. In the employment, therefore, of

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the great number of Ships and of Seamen which this Trade requires, it must be allowed to be a question well worthy of consideration, whether a plan may not be formed of making these subservient to the general interests of the State, as well as to the particular interests of the East India Company.

To that object, the Author of the following sheets has dedicated his attention; and if he shall be able, on a subject of such real importance, to give any useful suggestions, he shall reckon himself fully recompensed for the time and trouble he has bestowed—having himself no interest or connection either with those who are now in possession of the Shipping Trade of the East India Company, or with those who may wish to assume their places, and no circumstance that can have a tendency to bias his opinion the one way or the other, any further than the interest which, as an individual member of society, he takes in every thing connected with the prosperity of the British Empire.

Whatever prejudices may have been entertained at former periods against innovations, it seems now to be generally understood and admitted, that it is become highly expedient, and even necessary, to adopt some new system with regard to the Shipping Department of the East India Company.

This opinion has been gradually diffusing itself in all quarters, where the subject has been seriously attended to by those qualified to judge of it; and, in confirmation of that prevailing opinion, a Pamphlet, which has lately appeared, gives an opportunity of appealing to a very respectable authority, that of Mr. BARING, a Director of the East India Company, who appears to be animated with a laudable and well-informed zeal for the prosperity

prosperity and real interests of the Empire at large, as well as for the particular interests of the Company.

MR. BARING, in the Pamphlet with which he has lately favoured the Public, on the Principle and Effects of the Commutation Act, has pointed out the great probability of extending the Company's sales, in the article of Tea, from about six millions of pounds to at least eighteen millions of pounds annually; and then shews, that if the sales can be extended even no further than sixteen millions, that the surplus of ten millions above the former extent of the Company's sales will require the employment of 45 large Ships in that trade, more than are at present employed, the navigation of which will furnish employment for 3,450 seamen.

But, for the purpose of following up this great concern, and for securing the benefits of it permanently to this country, MR. BARING has fairly declared his opinion, that the East-India Company must change their system with regard to the Shipping employed by the Company, and the freight they pay for their goods brought from China. He has expressly declared, that the China trade never can support the present high freight, so long as there shall be any competition with foreign nations; and "that the Directors never can discharge the duty which they owe to their Constituents and to the Public, unless they make a total reform in the Shipping Department of the Company's affairs:"—He adds, "that the change must be made without delay, and be pursued with that firmness and impartiality which its magnitude and importance require."

The question, then, which now presents itself for discussion is, what Plan or System is the most proper to be substituted in the room of that which has hitherto taken place? And this is precisely the moment, of all others, for giving the fullest and fairest consideration to that question.

The diminution of the expence of Freight of the East India Company's goods between Asia and Europe is, no doubt, one object of material consequence, and well deserving of attention; but I hope to be able to shew, that it is not the *only object* which, in adopting a new system of Shipping, ought at this time to engage the attention either of the State or of the East India Company.

With a view solely to the object of diminishing the expence of Freight, the East India Directors have lately received proposals, by which certain persons have offered to build a sufficient number of Ships for the service of the Company; and the Owners of these Ships are willing to contract for four voyages at five pounds *per* ton less than the Company at present pay; whence, it is said, there would arise a saving of £. 150,000 *per annum*, upon the supposition of the Company's employing only thirty thousand tons of Shipping each year.

The amount of this saving in the article of Freight is, no doubt, of sufficient magnitude to engage the attention of the East India Company. But before adopting the plan that has been thus offered, there are two things that ought to be maturely weighed:—The one is, whether the Ships to be furnished by this new Company of Undertakers, and the mode in which they propose to carry on the commerce between Asia and Europe will, in all other respects, be equally well qualified

for that business as the Ships now employed. The other thing to be weighed is, whether either this new plan, which promises a considerable saving of Freight by the employment of Ships of a smaller size, or the old one, deserve to be put in competition with the plan to be hereinafter stated; which, besides the object of transporting the goods between Asia and Europe at a moderate charge to the Company, will be found to embrace additional objects connected with the interest of the State, and the stability and security of the British possessions in India.

On the first of these points, it has been properly adverted to by MR. BARING in his Pamphlet, " That although it may be urged, that the Company ought, and can employ those Ships, the Owners of which will accept the lowest Freight; yet there are circumstances which deserve attention and consideration before the Company venture to depart from their antient usage, under the faith of which very large capitals are employed."

In a competition between the Owners of those Ships, by which the commerce of the Company has hitherto been carried on, and the Company of Merchants who have offered to build and furnish Ships for that purpose at an inferior Freight, it would be a very erroneous policy to prefer the latter to the former, merely on account of the *apparent saving* in the article of Freight: there are a variety of other circumstances which, at the same time, must be taken under consideration.

It will, perhaps, be found, that the high rate of Freight hitherto paid is not fairly and solely imputable either to the avarice of these Ship Owners, or to any plan on their part to take

take advantage of the Public ; but that it has originated, in a great measure, from a system adopted and pursued by the East India Company with regard to the Ships employed, which system requires now to be varied and amended ; and when these amendments are made, the present Ship Owners, it is presumed, would of course be ready to furnish their Ships at a lower rate of Freight ; and if so, they seem to be well entitled to a preference on equal, or nearly equal, terms.

To account for the high rate of Freight, some attention must be paid to the various risques and inconveniences to which the Owners of Ships employed in the East India Company's service have been hitherto exposed, and to the conditions to which, by their agreements with the Company, they have been subjected.

In the 1st place—the size and dimensions of the Ship, the number of officers and men, their pay, and the quantity of stores and provisions, are fixed and regulated by the Company.

2dly, The Owners are liable to all damages from bad weather, or from short delivery in the cargo.

3dly, By the Company's regulations, the Ship is dismissed the service, after performing four voyages, even though it should appear that she was still in perfect good condition.

4thly, The Ships at present employed in the Company's service are bound to land a certain number of men, when required, for services on shore ; and as these Ships are in some respects fitted for war, it is in the power of the Company's administration

administration abroad to employ them for warlike purposes; and essential services have sometimes been rendered by them in that way:—They may also be detained in India during a long time after their arrival there.—On these accounts, the India Ships, on the present plan, must naturally be entitled to higher Freight than what would be due to a Merchant Ship merely employed to carry out one cargo, and to bring back another.

5thly, If any accident should happen to the Ship during the voyage, while in India, she is turned out of the Company's service, until thoroughly repaired, during which time she is at the expence of the Owners, who receive no demurrage.

6thly, If the Ship is lost during the voyage, all Freight is forfeited.

Lastly, The Ship may remain at home a considerable time unemployed, and thereby become a dead expence to the Owners.

From these circumstances it is evident, that a trade of this kind becomes a sort of lottery, turning out well or ill according to the superior good or bad fortune of the adventurers.

It is a well known fact, that the Ship-builders in the River, that is to say, the Builders of East India Ships, have very little profit by the building of these ships: It is upon the repairs that they chiefly reckon for profit. The Ships, which the new Undertakers offer to the Company, are proposed to be built to the Northward, near Newcastle, where, perhaps, there
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may be some saving on the tonnage in the original building; but these same Ships must be docked and repaired in the River, and at the same expence as the Ships presently employed; for it is not to be supposed, that the Owners would, after every voyage, send these Ships to the Northward to be repaired and docked, instead of getting it done in the River, where that business can be so well performed, besides the advantage of having the Ships near at hand when wanted.

When the new Undertakers offer their Ships at a lower rate of Freight, it is to be considered, not only whether the Ships they offer are equally well built, and in all respects equally well calculated for the purposes intended; but also, whether the Owners of them are to be subjected to all the same restrictions and conditions, to which the present Owners have hitherto been liable.

Those who are acquainted with the characters and conduct of the Captains and Officers employed in the East India Company's service, will be ready to admit, that in general they are a set of men who deserve well of their country; from their education and sentiments they are far superior to those classes of men employed in Ships in the merchant trade. By the liberality of the commanders of India Ships, in the voyages out and home, the sick and diseased Soldier and Sailor have often been fed and nourished from the Captain's table, who has no allowance either from the Company or Owners for what he bestows on them; and it is owing in a great measure to the activity and industry of the Captains and Officers of the East India Company's Shipping, that the Manufactures of this Country have been extended over a great part of India.

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Any plan, therefore, which in its operation would have the effect of immediately oversetting a number of Men of this description, who have reflected credit upon the Country, at the same time that they have been useful members of society, ought to be well weighed before it is adopted.

By these observations, however, it is not meant to throw any reflections upon those who have already brought, or may hereafter bring, under the view of the East India Directors, plans for saving money to the Company or to the Public, by lowering the rate of Freights: instead of discouraging such plans, whether they proceed from theoretical or practical men, every person who has any rational scheme to propose for promoting œconomy and industry, so essential in all commercial matters, deserves well of the Public, and ought to meet with every degree of facility and encouragement in the fair discussion of his plans.

But the tendency of the preceding observations, and of those which will be found in the subsequent part of these sheets, is to guard against ill-digested plans of *apparent savings* or *improvements*; and to shew, that at this crisis, there are other objects besides an apparent saving in the article of Freight, which, from their importance, are well deserving the attention both of the East India Company and of the Public.

The plans hitherto proposed for the diminution of the Freight are connected with the plan of *diminishing the size* and dimensions of the Ships employed in the East India Trade; but, after the most serious investigation, the result of the enquiries made by the Author of this Pamphlet, and of his best
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That the size of the East India Company's Ships ought not to be diminished, but increased.

attention to the subject, is, that the size of the Ships employed in the East India Company's trade, particularly of the Ships trading to China and the Coast of Coromandel, ought to be increased instead of being diminished; and in support of this opinion, there are two Propositions, which he hopes to establish.

1st Proposition in support of that opinion.

The 1st is, That the employment of larger, in preference to smaller vessels, is productive of advantages in a commercial view; that it is better suited to the nature and circumstances of that trade; and, that it does not necessarily encrease the expence of Freight.

2d Proposition in support of it.

The 2d Proposition is, That by increasing the size of the Ships, and by a new mode of construction, under suitable regulations, the same Ships that are employed for the purposes of the East India Company's commerce may be rendered of important utility as Ships of force, either in times of war or upon sudden emergencies. That by these means they will give stability to the British possessions in India, at the same time that they will afford protection to the British commerce between Asia and Europe.

Facts and arguments in support of the 1st proposition.

In support of the 1st of these Propositions it is to be observed, that by encreasing the size of the Ships a very great saving is made in the heavy establishment of Officers, Mates, and the official Crew necessary to support a proper command; for a Ship of 1400 tons will require no more Officers than a Ship of half that size; and as a very large proportion of every Ship must be occupied by the Captain and Officers, in cabins, stores, and privilege, it must be evident, that the room for stowing

stowing of goods in a ship of 1400 tons must be considerably greater than in two Ships of 700 tons burthen, with double the establishment of officers; and the number of common men necessary for a Ship of 1400 tons would not be double of what would be requisite for a Ship of 700 tons; for the number of men requisite does by no means increase in the proportion of the difference of tonnage: Hence it is, that large Ships are found to be cheaper for the conveyance of goods, especially in distant voyages, than small Ships.

Foreign Companies trading to China, particularly the Danes and Swedes, have been so sensible of the advantage of large Ships, and especially of their tendency to reduce expences, that all their China Ships are from 1200 to 1500 tons burthen.

The Dutch Ships sent to China are in general larger than the English Ships, though not so large as either the Danes or Swedes.

With regard to the French, they, in the year 1773, had two 64 gun Ships at China, which were at that time employed for the commercial purpose of bringing home cargoes from China; and these same Ships afterwards formed part of the French fleet, which, under the command of Monsieur d'Orvilliers, engaged the British fleet off Ushant on the 27th of July, 1778.

Thus, every foreign nation trading to China has had recourse to large Ships, in preference to small ones; and this circumstance is one of the material advantages they have had over the English East India Company.

The Swedish China Company, whose affairs have generally been conducted with great prudence and good management, have built the largest Ships employed in the China trade. Their Ships are of 1500 tons burthen at least, and they are navigated by about 170 or 180 men. Besides their being qualified to contain very large cargoes, the Swedish Ships are remarkable good sailers, and afford a convincing proof that a Ship may be made of a large construction, qualified to contain a large cargo, and at the same time well adapted to the purposes of a good sailing vessel.

Some of the plans lately offered to the consideration of the East India Directors for the diminution of the expences of Freight, particularly the plan given in by MR. BROUGH, are bottomed upon the supposed advantages that will arise from employing Ships of a smaller size even than those hitherto used by the East India Company. His plan is, that the Ships to be employed should be only from 500 to 600 tons burthen, instead of Ships, as at present, from 750 to 1000 tons; and in support of his reasoning he appeals to the practice of foreign Companies, where, he says, Freight is got at a much cheaper rate than in England. But the preceding facts and observations, if well founded, must shew, that the diminution of the size of the Ships is a bad expedient for lowering the expence of Freight, and that his appeal to the practice of foreign countries, in support of his argument on this point, has been unfortunate.

If the employment of large Ships, in preference to small ones, in the China trade, can be supported by facts and fair arguments, as productive of advantages suited merely to the commercial views of the East India Company, that preference
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in favour of large Ships will appear in a much stronger and decisive point of view, from the considerations now to be stated in support of the second Proposition abovementioned, viz.

“ That by increasing the size of the Ships, and by a
 “ new mode of construction, under suitable regulations,
 “ the same Ships that are employed for the Company’s
 “ commerce may be rendered of important utility as
 “ Ships of force, &c.”

The size of the Ships, which have hitherto been employed by the East India Company in their Trade to India and China, is from 700 to 950 tons, the largest of which is chartered to the Company only at 750 tons burthen. The India Ships presently employed generally mount 26 guns, whereof 20 are guns of nine pounders, and six of them are three or four pounders; and these Ships, even upon their present plan of construction, have frequently been employed, and found of some utility, as Ships of force, especially when acting in conjunction with His Majesty’s Ships.

Proofs in support of the 2d Proposition.

The size of a Line of Battle Ship of 64 guns is about 1300 tons; but a Ship of that tonnage, built upon the plan of acting in the double capacity of a fighting and trading Ship, would not be qualified to carry above 1000 or 1100 tons of goods.

The Ships made use of by the Danes and Swedes, in their China trade, are of a size equal to those 64 gun Ships; particularly the Swedes make use of Ships in that trade of 1500 tons at least; and it has been already mentioned, that the French, in the year 1773, employed two 64 gun Ships in the China trade.

trade. These Ships were lent by the King of France to the merchants; and, after having performed that mercantile service, they were returned to the French navy, and were, during the last war, employed in the King's service.

There are instances still more decisive, with regard to the practicability and expediency of employing, in the East Indies, Ships qualified for the purposes either of war or of commerce.

These instances are furnished by the history of the events in India during the war between the English and French, which began in the year 1756, and ended in the year 1762. In the course of that war the French, in their sea engagements, and upon various emergencies, made great use of Ships which had been built by the French East India Company for answering the double purposes of war and of commerce, upon a plan precisely similar to that which is now recommended to the British East India Company.

In the beginning of the year 1757, the French Government had fitted out a squadron of ships of war to be sent to India, under the command of the Count d'Aché; but before the time of their departure from Brest, such sinister accounts had been received of the French affairs in Canada, that the destination of some of the principal ships of Count d'Aché's squadron was changed, by sending them to America instead of India; and the navy of France, in that time of distress, was not able to spare, from its other necessities, Ships of equal force to supply the place of those sent upon the American service. The French Government, upon that occasion, had recourse to the aid of Ships which had been built by the French East India Company

pany upon the plan of serving as men of war upon emergencies.

This circumstance is particularly stated in Orme's History, page 296, in these words: " But the French East India Company had several Ships *built expressly to serve, when required, as men of war*, of which four had sailed in December with the regiment of Lorraine, and three were now added to the two M. d'Aché already had under his command, and he was to take the others at the Isle of France."

Orme mentions, that Count d'Aché arrived on the 18th of December 1757, at the Isle of France; that there he found the French East India Company's Ships, which had carried the regiment of Lorraine, returned from Pondicherry; and that, taking such of these ships as he chose, and their crews, Count d'Aché formed the squadron with which he appeared on the Coast of Coromandel on the 28th of April, 1758, near to Fort St. David's.

Within a few days after the arrival of Count d'Aché on the Coast, an engagement took place between the squadron under his command and the British squadron commanded by Admiral Pocock, which was fought with great obstinacy on both sides, but ended without any decisive victory on either part.

In this action, where the French line consisted of nine sail, it is remarkable that there was only one Ship belonging to the navy of France, viz. the Zodiac of 74 guns, all the other Ships of the squadron were Ships belonging to the French East India Company, to the number of eight, and these eight had
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not then mounted the complete number of guns they were capable of carrying.

The names and force of the French East India Company's Ships engaged in that action, in April 1758, as related by Mr. Orme, were as follows :

Vengeur	- - - -	54 guns,
Bien Aimé	- - - -	58,
Condé	- - - -	44,
Duc d'Orleans	- - - -	50,
Saint Louis	- - - -	50,
Moras	- - - -	44,
Sylphe	- - - -	36,
Duc de Burgoyne	- - - -	60.

Orme, page
332.

In the month of August, in that same year, 1758, a second engagement took place between the French and English squadrons, in which engagement Count d'Aché's squadron was composed in the same manner as in the preceding engagement of the month of April, 1758, with this difference only, that the Count de Provence, a Company's Ship of 74 guns, had been added to his squadron, and, on the other hand, he had lost the aid of one of the Company's Ships, the Bien Aimé of 58 guns, which had been stranded on the surf; and the Sylphe, another of the Company's Ships, was kept out of the engagement to repeat signals.

There were, therefore, engaged in this action, one Ship of the French Navy and seven ships of the French East India Company.

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On the third of September, 1758, Count d'Aché left the Coast of Coromandel, and sailed, with all the Ships of his squadron, to the Isle of Mauritius, where he found, in the port, a reinforcement of three men of war, under the command of M. D'Egulle; and it is particularly mentioned, that "several of the Company's vessels, but none of force, for enough had been sent before, were likewise arrived from France." Hence it appears, that the French East India Company had at that time employed in their service Ships of different sizes, and different degrees of force.

Orme, page
511.

While at Mauritius, Count D'Aché ordered the strength of four of the Company's fighting Ships, which had not hitherto mounted the number of guns they were built for, to be armed to the full scale of their construction; and the whole squadron under his command sailed from thence for the Coast of Coromandel on the 17th of July, 1759.

On the 10th of September, 1759, the British and French squadrons again engaged each other off Fort St. David's.

In this action the English squadron, under the command of Admiral Pocock, consisted of nine Ships of the line, attended by a frigate, the Queensborough, two of the English East India Company's Ships, and the Protecteur, converted to a fire-ship.

The French were eleven sail of the line, of which four were of the navy of France, and seven of the East India Company's Ships, viz.

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The Vengeur	- - - -	64 guns,
The Duc d'Orleans	- -	60,
Saint Louis	- - - -	56,
Duc de Bourgoyne	- -	56,
The Comte de Provence	-	74,
Fortunée	- - - -	64,
Centaur	- - - -	68.

It is to be remarked, that the four first of these Company's Ships were the same which had been in the actions of April and August 1758, but carried more guns in this action than in the former.—The fifth of the Company's Ships, the Comte de Provence, had been in the action of August 1758, and carried no less than 74 guns.—The two last, the Fortunée and Centaur, Company's Ships of considerable force, were added since the actions of the preceding year.

This action of 10th September, 1759, ended like the former, without any decisive victory on either side, though it was maintained with great bravery and spirit.

These instances of the great use made by the French of Ships built by the French East India Company, upon the plan of serving as Ships of force on emergencies, are certainly sufficient for proving the practicability and utility of such a plan of construction; and it has been thought the more necessary to state these things here with precision, and at some length, because the Author, in the course of his conversations on these matters, has found, that there are many persons in England, enemies to innovations, who are disposed to consider the plan
of

of constructing India Ships qualified for both purposes as chimerical or impracticable.

The instances which have been given of the experiments made by the French nation of this plan, and of the useful consequences that resulted from it on repeated occasions, may serve to deprive the Author, in some degree, of the merit of novelty, or invention, in what he has proposed; but should entitle the plan itself to the superior merit of being recommended and supported, not merely by general reasonings, but by the actual experience which the French nation have had of its being both practicable and useful.

The matter now to be considered seems, therefore, to be reduced to the following question:

“ Whether, in the present circumstances of Great Britain
 “ and of the East India Company, there are sufficient
 “ motives and inducements for their making the ex-
 “ periment of Ships qualified both for the purposes of
 “ Commerce and of War; and how far that scheme is
 “ capable of being carried into effect?”

With regard to the motives for making the experiment, it may, without any exaggeration, or apprehension of incurring the imputation of over sanguineness, be maintained, that if ever there existed a situation productive of the strongest inducements for making such experiment, it is that in which the British Nation and the East India Company are now placed with respect

to their commerce with Asia, and their possessions in that part of the world?

The trade which Great Britain carries on with India and China is superior to that of all the other European powers united; and no country whatever has such valuable possessions in India as those which belong to the British nation; but these very circumstances naturally beget the jealousy and envy of other European powers, who would certainly be disposed, if a fair opportunity offered, to diminish the British influence and possessions in that part of the world, and to acquire to themselves some participation in that trade, which they consider as the source of immense wealth and treasure to the Public, and to the individuals in Great Britain.

The vast distance from Europe of the British possessions in India, the hazards or vicissitudes to which they may be exposed from the fluctuating politics of the country powers there, and from the intrigues carried on with these country powers by European states, either hostile to Great Britain, or jealous of its prosperity, point out the *possibility* at least that a fatal blow may at some period be attempted against the British power in India, and against their commerce with that part of the world, unless these hazards be averted by such prudent means of prevention, on the part of Great Britain, as may deprive their enemies of any rational hopes of success from the disturbances they might be tempted to excite.

Every hostile attempt from European powers, upon the British possessions or commerce in India, must be carried on under the protection of a naval force; and by various accidents or contrivances, an European power disposed to injure the British interests

interests in India, and more especially two or more European powers combining together for that purpose, might, upon particular emergencies, assemble such a number of Ships of war in India, as would be an overmatch for any naval force stationed there on the part of England, and might, before the arrival of a fleet from Britain, supposing Britain at the time able to spare fleets from home, do infinite mischief both to the British commerce and interests in India.

For preventing the success of any sudden enterprize of this kind, and even for preventing the attempt, the plan proposed, of carrying on the trade of the British East India Company in large Ships qualified for Ships of war, could not fail to be of the most singular utility.

With a view to having Ships qualified to carry large cargoes, and at the same time to act with great effect as Ships of force, it might be expedient that some of them should be built of the size of 74 gun Ships, but so as to mount only 64 guns: the surplus tonnage would not only increase the room for the commercial cargoes and stores, but a Ship of that size, carrying only 64 guns, would admit of the lower tier of guns being of heavier metal; for instead of 24 pounders, commonly used in the lower tier of 64 gun Ships, the guns in the lower tier of the Ship above proposed might be of 32 pounders, by which means, in time of action, she would have some of the most material advantages of a 74, though with the appearance only of a 64 gun Ship.

It has been already shewn, that the French East India Company had employed, in their service, Ships which actually
mounted

mounted 74 guns, and must have been of a larger size than what is here proposed for Ships mounting 64 guns. But whether the plan be adopted of employing Ships of the size of 74, though mounting only 64 guns; or of the size of 64, though mounting only an inferior number of guns, in either case, the great number of Ships thus employed in the Company's trade would constitute a most formidable fleet in cases of emergency.

When once Ships of the above description are in general used in the Company's service, there will probably be not less than 40 or 50 sail afloat at a time. With such a fleet, it would be very difficult indeed for any enemy to send to India detached ships of war, or to steal out in such force as to occasion any real danger to the British interests or commerce.

Another material advantage to the East India Company would arise from a vast saving, in time of war, in the single article of demurrage; for Ships constructed in the manner above suggested would not require to wait for convoy; they would be sufficient convoy of themselves; and when in fleets, several of them may mount their lower guns, while the rest will only have their upper tier, which, from the strength and size of the Ship, and weight of metal, will place them above any insult from Ships of one tier of guns.

When the commerce of the East India Company is carried on in Ships of such force, it will have no bad effect too, in keeping the Country Powers in India in a proper state of awe and respect for the British nation: their opinion of the superior force,

force, prowess, and resources of the British nation is not immaterial, from the influence it has upon their conduct or intrigues. Their knowledge of the great number of British Ships of force at all times in the Indian Seas, or in their passage thither from Europe, would make them shy of embarking in any plans or intrigues, that might draw upon them the resentment of a nation possessed of such evident superiority to all other European powers in that part of the globe.

If the plan, that has been suggested, shall be approved of by Government and the East India Company, the Ships to be hereafter employed should be built upon a plan agreed upon between the Admiralty and the East India Company. They should be so constructed as to admit of taking in a considerable cargo, with their lower gun ports of a sufficient height above the water; every Ship to take her lower tier of guns in her hold, which could be no inconvenience, as all the India Ships carry a certain quantity of iron kintledge as ballast out and home: there should, therefore, be deposited in the different presidencies in India and in China, a sufficiency of iron kintledge to answer the purpose of ballast, in cases of emergencies, when the lower tier of guns are to be brought from the hold in battery.

These Ships may be so constructed as to admit of carrying larger cargoes than Ships built solely for the purpose of acting as men of war, and at the same time less unfit for the purposes of war than the present East India Ships, where, in the construction of the vessel, the principal attention is to qualify her for carrying large cargoes of goods and stores.

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In the construction of Ships qualified for both purposes, there must, no doubt, be a sacrifice of a considerable quantity of tonnage that might otherwise have been employed for the commercial purpose solely of transporting goods; but this sacrifice ought to be compensated to the East India Company, or to the Ship Owners, by Government, as so many material advantages in other respects will be acquired to the State from the construction of vessels calculated for the purposes of war, as well as those of commerce.

This may be done by a bounty to be paid by Government to the Owners of Ships built upon the plan concerted between the Admiralty and the India Company, or by some other mode of encouragement to be agreed upon, for indemnifying against the extra charges incurred by the construction and maintenance of vessels built for answering the double purpose above mentioned; in particular, it seems natural and proper that Government should furnish the lower tier of guns, and the extra warlike stores.

If the measure itself shall, upon mature deliberation, be found to be wise and politic, there would not be much difficulty in making a proper arrangement between Government on the one hand, and the East India Company on the other, with respect to the just proportions that ought to be undertaken by the one or the other, of the total additional expence incurred, from the Company's carrying on their commerce in Ships constructed for answering the purposes both of commerce and of war.

The interests of the State and of the East India Company are now so essentially interwoven with each other, that it would be idle to suppose, that a plan, calculated to promote the advantages,

vantages, and to secure the prosperity of both, should be obstructed in its execution, by difficulties or disputes about the exact proportions to be undertaken by each, of the charges of that plan.

In bargains entered into between different states, or between companies or individuals, where there is no common interest between the contracting parties, each state or party naturally endeavours to make the terms of the bargain as advantageous as possible for themselves, and the advantage gained by the one party turns to the prejudice of the other: But this would not be a true description of the relative situations and interests of the British State and the East India Company; for, supposing the encouragement to be given by Government to the East India Company for building and maintaining Ships upon the plan above suggested, should even exceed a little the limits of the exact proportions which the India Company could strictly be entitled to claim on account of extra expence attending the proposed alteration of their Shipping Establishment, still any advantage that might from thence accrue to the India Company ought not to be considered as money lost to the State; for, besides the general interest which the State has in the prosperity of the East India Company, the nature of their connection, in consequence of the particular agreements entered into between them, is such, that there are many channels through which a participation of the pecuniary advantages to be enjoyed by the East India Company is secured to the great stream of the national wealth, or to the increase of the annual revenues of the State.

The tendency of these observations is to remove the objections to the plan, founded on the notion of the apparent dif-

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difficulty of drawing the line between Government and the East India Company, as to the just proportions of expence attending the new plan of Shipping; and for shewing, that in drawing that line, it should be done upon liberal principles.

Instead, therefore, of pretending to suggest the precise proportions of the extra expences to be undertaken by Government on the one hand, or by the East India Company and the Ship Owners on the other, it may be more useful here to bring under view some of the material advantages which each party will derive from the proposed plan, and, consequently, the inducements which each must have for avoiding any unnecessary disputes or difficulties that might prevent its being carried into execution.

With respect to the East India Company, there are various inducements for their adopting the proposed plan :

1st, Because it must be a great advantage to them to have their commerce carried on, and their cargoes of goods and stores transported in, large Ships to and from Asia; while these Ships are so constructed as to afford protection to the cargoes in time of war, and to secure them against any sudden emergencies or surprise in time of peace.

2dly, Because, by the means of Ships thus qualified to protect themselves, either as single Ships or in fleets, the East India Company will be freed from the heavy charges of demurrage, to which they have hitherto been

been subject in time of war, by waiting for proper convoys.

3dly, Because, by the agreements which at present subsist between Government and the East India Company, a heavy charge falls upon the Company by the proportion which they are obliged to pay of the expences of the King's Ships of war sent to India for the preservation of the settlements and commerce there, either in time of war or in time of peace; but when the proposed plan of increasing the size and force of East India Ships is carried into execution, it may not be necessary to have so many Ships of the King's navy employed in India, either in time of war, or in the time of peace, and by that means the saving to the Company in that respect will be very material *.

4thly, Because

* By an act of parliament, passed in the year 1781, entitled " An Act for establishing an Agreement with the United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies," it was settled, that during the continuance of the war with France, Spain, and Holland, the Company should provide and supply all the victualling to be delivered in the East Indies necessary for his Majesty's ships and vessels sent, or to be sent, to the East Indies, upon the requisition of the Company; and also for the sick and hurt seamen belonging to such ships and vessels, during the time such ships and vessels shall be employed in the East Indies.

The act further directs, a just and true account to be kept of the victualling so furnished, and that the Lords of the Treasury should pay to the Company one fourth part of all such victualling so provided by the East India Company; by which means *three fourths* of the whole of that charge of victualling were to be defrayed by the Company.

By sections 20, 21, and 22, of the said Act, the Company were to send to the East Indies such naval and military stores as the Commissioners of the Navy &c. should direct, the Treasury being obliged to pay to the Company, within

4thly, Because the proposed plan, when carried into effect, must, in its consequences, not only give greater protection to the Company's commerce in time of war, but have a beneficial tendency for preventing war. For the great naval force of the Company in India, in consequence of the proposed plan, would give them a decided advantage, in that part of the world, against any European power in the breaking out of a war; and, operating as a security against any sudden emergency or surprise, would by that means be the most likely to avert any attempts for creating disturbances, or injuring the interests of the East India Company in Asia. Supposing, therefore, the expences of the Company in their Shipping Establishment to be increased to a certain degree by the new plan, they would be

40 days after delivering in the account, a sum nearly adequate to the value of such stores, and the remainder of the value to be paid for after the delivery in the East Indies; and the Company was, during the war with France, Spain, and Holland, bound to supply naval and military stores for the wear and tear and repair of such ships and vessels belonging to his Majesty, as should be employed in the East Indies, the prime cost whereof should be repaid by the Treasury, during hostilities with France, Spain, and Holland.

By section 19, it was provided, that from and after peace should be restored with France, Spain, and Holland, the said United Company should provide and supply all the victualling requisite for his Majesty's ships in the East Indies, at their own proper expences, cost, and charges.

And by section 23, that the said United Company, so long as they shall remain in possession of the territorial possessions and revenues in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, should furnish, at their own proper costs and charges, such naval and military stores as should be necessary and be required for the use of such of his Majesty's ships and vessels as should, at the request of the said Company, remain on service in the East Indies in time of peace with the European Powers.

To these heavy charges the East India Company have hitherto been liable, by the employment of his Majesty's ships of war in the East Indies.

much.

much more than compensated by the superior security they would thus enjoy in their commerce and possessions, and by the rational prospect it would afford of a long continuance of peace.

With respect to the State, the inducements for adopting this plan are not less palpable and powerful :

1st, Because the same circumstances, which give protection to the commerce of the East India Company, and tend to the stability of the British possessions in India, must necessarily be productive of advantages, strength, and prosperity, to the State.

2ndly, Because, when the East India Ships shall be of such force as to be able either separately, or in fleets, to protect their own cargoes, it will be both an advantage and convenience to Government to be liberated from the necessity of supplying the East India Company with ships of the line, or frigates, to convoy their Ships in time of war. And it is a circumstance also of some importance, that the proposed increase of the size, and new mode of construction of the India Ships, will make them greatly more convenient and healthful for transporting troops to India, when the exigencies of war might render that measure necessary.

3dly, Because the sum to be contributed by Government, as their proportion of the expences of constructing and maintaining, in the service of the East India Company, a number of Ships of force, would be amply compensated

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to the State, by the savings which Government would by that means be enabled to make in her naval expences in other respects; for in proportion to the number of these Ships of force employed in the service of the East India Company, whether they be reckoned 64 gun Ships, or at whatever other rate of force they may be estimated, Government might, to the extent of the Ships so employed in the Company's service, dispense with building and maintaining, on their own account, a correspondent number of Ships of the same force or description in the King's navy.

4thly, Because there would be a great saving to the Nation in the expence of *money* and of *men*, when a plan is adopted, by which Government, instead of being at the sole expence of building, maintaining, and manning any given number of Ships of 64 guns, or such other force as shall be agreed upon, is only to be liable to pay a certain proportion of that expence, by allowing a certain bounty or encouragement to the East India Company for building, maintaining, and manning these Ships at their own expence, though calculated for the mutual benefit of the State and the Company.

5thly, Because this plan, when adopted, would render the construction of 64 gun Ships for the King's navy less necessary, or at least would diminish the number of Ships of that description requisite to be built for the use of the navy, and by that means leave it more in the power of Government to dedicate their attention and efforts, and the sums voted for the navy, to the construction of large and capital Ships, which are now become the more
§ necessary,

necessary, as both the French and Spaniards have of late been bending their attention to the construction of three deckers, and to increasing the number of large and capital Ships in their service.

Having thus stated some of the most remarkable advantages that will accrue to the State and to the East India Company from the proposed plan, the Author begs leave to remark, that in recommending the use of large Ships for the Company's service, that plan is particularly calculated for the Ships employed in the trade to China, Madras, Bombay, and Bencoolen, but not for the Bengal trade. He is well aware, that Ships of a large construction will not answer for the *Bengal River*; and that, therefore, a certain number of Ships of a smaller size, similar to the present East India Ships, must be continued in the service for that purpose.

But as all the Ships now employed in the India service are of a proper size for that trade, and it will require a number of years before these Ships are wore out of the service, an objection of that sort ought not to prevent this plan's being immediately carried into execution as fast as new bottoms are to be built upon; and the Company will have sufficient time to deliberate upon the Bengal trade, and to fix and ascertain the number and dimensions of Ships of a smaller size, that will be necessary to be kept up for that trade; and also, whether or not some amendment might not be made in the construction of Ships for the Bengal river, to render them more safe, and better suited for the purposes of that trade.

Collateral
advantages
from the plan
proposed.

IN addition to the preceding observations, relating to the size and force of Ships to be employed in the service of the East India Company, it may not be improper to throw out for consideration some collateral advantages which may naturally be grafted on that new system.

Under proper regulations, the service on board the Ships of the East India Company constructed for the double purposes of war and of commerce, may become a noble nursery for Officers, not only for the Company's service, but for that of the navy.

Every establishment or contrivance that may be the means of affording a proper education to young men intended for the service of the navy, and of bringing them up in such a manner as that, upon the breaking out of a war, we may not be at a loss to find young men qualified to act the part of Officers, must be allowed to be an object of importance to this country. The fact is, that as matters are situated at present, there are few opportunities, in time of peace, of young men learning all the various occurrences of a sea-life, or of acquiring knowledge in the profession for which they are intended.

Is it on board a guard-ship, or during a summer cruize in a frigate in times of peace, that such knowledge is to be acquired? —Certainly not.

To be qualified to pass for a Lieutenant in the navy, it is prescribed that the young Midshipman must have served, or have been rated, on board a man of war during the space of six years. Now it may happen in peaceable times, and often has happened,

happened, that the Midshipman may have been rated or served during the whole of the time prescribed, without having ever been in a single gale of wind, and without any other knowledge of sea affairs than what was acquired in a guardship, where they generally loiter away their time in idleness or dissipation.

How is it possible, on the breaking out of a war, that Officers can suddenly be formed from young men so educated?

An obvious and natural remedy for these defects would be, the allowing an extra number of Midshipmen to every India-man, especially to the large Ships destined for the China trade; and that the time of service on board such Ships should be deemed equivalent to service on board the King's Ships, so as to entitle these Midshipmen to be qualified for being made Lieutenants of the navy, after the expiration of the six years prescribed in the King's service.

This simple regulation would be of remarkable efficacy in supplying the British navy with young Officers qualified, from knowledge and experience, for their stations; for during these long voyages to and from Asia to Europe, they would have opportunities of being acquainted with most of the occurrences of a sea life, besides the advantage of being seasoned to different climates; and the friends of the young gentlemen intended for the navy would certainly prefer sending them on board an India Ship for two or three voyages, especially during the early part of life, as a much more eligible plan for them, than the idle, unprofitable, and dangerous education on board a guardship at home; it would also occur to them, that

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young men thus educated on board the East India Ships would have two chances instead of one, for it might be optional to them, either to follow the line of the navy service or that of the East India Company.

Another collateral improvement, very proper to be grafted on the new establishment of the Company's Shipping, relates to the powers with which it would be expedient to invest the Captains and Officers of these Ships, for maintaining proper discipline and subordination.

The situation of Officers of East India Ships on the present footing is, from experience, felt to be extremely disagreeable; forced on the one hand to execute their duty as Officers, or to be dismissed from the service, while, on the other, they are exposed to vexatious suits and prosecutions for every effort on their part to support proper authority and discipline on board their Ships, without the aid or protection of any mutiny bill, or any thing resembling that system of martial law, by which proper discipline and obedience are secured on board the Ships of his Majesty's navy.

These suits are, on the return from East India voyages, frequently suggested to the Sailors, and carried on by persons known under the description of Wapping Solicitors; who, for very trifling considerations, purchase the cause from the Sailor, and carry it on in his name.—If damages are given against the Officer, the Wapping Solicitor pockets the money, with costs of suit; while in the mean time the Sailor, being gone to some other part of the world, should the Officer obtain a verdict in his favour, no person appears on the part of the Sailor to pay the costs to which the Officer is entitled.—Many instances

stances have occurred of suits of this sort, in some of which the Officer, after being put to much trouble and expence, is punished with a certain loss after having gained his cause.

Justice, both to the Officers and Sailors in the East India Company's service, requires that something should be done for improving the system, and that the line should be drawn for each.

But more especially when the Ships to be employed by the Company are to be destined on the new plan, to perform the duties of Ships of war, either upon sudden emergencies or during the time of actual war, it will become both expedient and necessary, that the authority of the Officers, and the subordination and discipline on board the Ships, should be better established and supported; and that, in general, the maritime service of the East India Company should be put on a more respectable footing.

For this purpose it may be proper, that in the voyages to and from India, or during the time of actual service, the authority of the Officers in the Company's service, and the power of enforcing good discipline, should be supported and enforced, either by a mutiny bill particularly adapted to that service, or by extending to it, under certain restrictions, some parts of the mutiny bill, by which his Majesty's navy is regulated, and by the force of which proper discipline, subordination, and good order, are maintained on board the Ships of the navy.

It has been already mentioned, that the Captains of East India Ships are in general persons of liberal education and

sentiments, and that they are men who, from their conduct on material occasions, have deserved well of their country. In the course both of the last and of former wars, there were many instances of East India Company's Officers distinguishing themselves with a spirit and good conduct which would have done credit to any professional military Officers.

This is a spirit which ought to be cultivated and encouraged, especially upon the new plan of increasing the size and force of the East India Company's Ships; not only by investing them with such powers and authority as the maintenance of good discipline may require, but by putting them on a respectable footing in all points connected with their proper authority while in actual service.

That Company's Officers are capable of rendering most essential services, in the military way, in times of war, or when the occasion calls for their exertions, is proved not only by the instances of that sort which have happened in the service of the British East India Company, but also by the very distinguished instances in the service of the French East India Company.

The summary account which has already been given of the actions in the East Indies, in the years 1758 and 1759, between the British fleet, under the command of Admiral Pocock, and the French fleet, under the command of Count D'Aché, shews, that in all these actions the contest was maintained, on the part of France principally and almost entirely, by Officers who did not belong to the King of France's navy, but to the French East India Company.

Thus,

Thus, in the action of April 1758, where the French Admiral's line consisted of nine Ships, there was but one Ship belonging to the French navy, and the other eight Ships belonged to the French East India Company, officered by their own Officers. In the second action of August, 1758, the French Admiral's line consisted of eight Ships, whereof one was of the King's navy, and the other seven Company's Ships. And in the action in September, 1759, where the Count D'Aché's Squadron amounted to eleven Ships, four of them were King's Ships, and the remaining seven were Ships of the French East India Company.

That the French Company's Ships were commanded and officered, not by Officers of the King of France's navy, but by the Company's own Officers, is known from the history of the transactions of those times; and particularly there is one passage in Orme's History, page 693, which puts this matter beyond doubt, where, in giving an account of the arrival of the French Squadron from the Coast of Coromandel at the Isle of France, in the month of November, 1759, and the measures taken by Count D'Aché while at the Isle of France, he makes mention of a dispute which arose with the Officers of the French East India Company's service, in these words:

“ In this distress, it was resolved to follow the example of
 “ the preceding year, and to send three Ships of burthen,
 “ under the convoy of the Centaur of 74 guns, belonging to
 “ the French Company, to purchase provisions at the Cape of
 “ Good Hope. But M. d'Aché proposed to give the com-
 “ mand of the Centaur to the Captain of the King's Ship, the
 “ Actif, on which all the Captains of the Company's Ships of
 “ war

“ war protested against this preference, as derogatory to their
 “ own rights ; and whilst the tedious disputations usual on such
 “ occasions were carrying on in writing, with much acerbity
 “ and little public zeal, the annual tempest of the elements
 “ in this climate arose, in the night of the 27th of January,
 “ and lasted without intermission, and with the utmost excess,
 “ for 36 hours.”

From this passage, it is evident that the French East India Company's Ships, which had so distinguished themselves in the engagements of the year 1758 and 1759, had been under the command of Officers, belonging to the French East India Company ; and it is presumable, that these Officers, who thus ventured to dispute with the Admiral the preference intended by him to an Officer in the King's service, had, by the arrangements made before their leaving France, been put on a respectable footing.

At any rate, the history of the operations of the French fleet under the command of the Count d'Aché, shews how capable the Officers of the Company's Ships were of rendering essential services in times of war ; which ought to remove the prejudices of those who imagine that none but Officers of the Navy can be of real utility in times of hostility and danger—But, in order to increase their utility, every reason concurs for strengthening their hands, by giving them the power of maintaining good discipline, and putting them on a respectable footing.

1786, April

1786, April 12th.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the preceding sheets were drawn up, the Author has this day had occasion to see a paper wrote by the late Lord Clive, on the subject of East India affairs, one part of which relates to the East India Company's Shipping; and it has given the Author great satisfaction to perceive, how much the ideas suggested by him in the preceding sheets coincide with the plan which Lord Clive had earnestly recommended, with respect to the size and force of Ships to be employed in the service of the East India Company.

In the paper drawn up by Lord Clive, in the year he mentions, that the commerce of the Company was then carried on in Ships from 800 to 1000 tons burthen; and he reckoned about 96 of these Ships requisite for the Company's business, whereof he reckoned 32 afloat in India or China, 32 in their passage to or from thence, and 32 at home.

The improvement which his Lordship proposed was, that instead of these 96 Ships at the present rate of tonnage, there should be only 60 Ships, whereof 40 to be Ships of 70 guns, qualified to act as Ships of war, as well as for commercial purposes. His Lordship takes notice, that the Bengal river not admitting of Ships of so great a size, therefore it may be necessary to carry on the Bengal trade in Ships of the size of those presently used, and on that account only he proposes, that 20 of the 60 Ships should not be increased beyond the present size.

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But he remarks, that the trade to the Coasts of Coromandel and Malabar, to Sumatra and China, &c. may be carried on with more advantage in Ships of a great size; and he considers it as an object of the first importance to this country, that the Ships employed to those places should be constructed of a size to carry 70 guns; and he states the various material advantages that must arise to this country from having such a fleet of Ships of force employed in the East India Company's service.

He takes notice, that by that means they will be able to protect the commerce, and, besides serving as convoys to their own cargoes, may, in time of war, be of use as convoys, in the European seas, to other ships employed in the trade of this country.

His Lordship mentions, that the French and Dutch have Ships employed in their East Indian commerce qualified to act as Ships of force; and takes notice of the hazard to which Great Britain is, from that circumstance, exposed, in the case of a war with these powers.—But, on the other hand, he observes, that if the plan suggested by him, of having forty of the East India Company's Ships so constructed as to carry 70 guns, is adopted, that then the national strength, derived from this plan, will make us *invincible* in that part.—These are the words of Lord Clive, whose authority, on this subject must be allowed to be of great weight; and he concludes, by earnestly recommending, that the measure should be steadily pursued, without paying regard to any partial or interested oppositions, to it.



F I N I S.